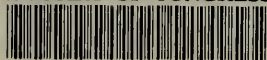


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EVALENA

BY

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Illustrated by

EDNA DAWSON HARLEY



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"EVALENA."

*To my daughter Edna,
who so patiently has dipped her pen to
illustrate my thoughts.*

EVALENA.

Down by a brooklet, dashing ever clear,
Where birds in spring are chanting far and near,
Where swaying branches beckon to the waves
Which dance and sparkle where the sun-fish laves,
Where perfumed flowers nestle in the bank,
And clover blossoms nodding soft and rank
To the flag-stones which bridge the brooklet o'er,
Laid down as stepping stones from shore to shore,
In the calm morning or at noon or night,
Or when the moon is shining clear and bright,
Stepping with agile foot from stone to stone,
Poor Evalena boldly walks alone.

"Upon what mission?" do I hear you ask?
"And why the oft repeated, weary task?"
Weary, no doubt, for you or me, my friend;
For her, the only joy 'til life shall end.
Think ye she seeks the brook at midnight's hour
To catch the perfumed breeze from tree and flower,
Or gaze upon her image mirrored there,
Her image full of sorrow, marked with care?
List! ask the woodland zephyrs what *they* know.
They drop their voices to a whisper low,
And sigh pathetically; then hold their breath
At mention of the anguish, sin and death
Which only zephyrs witnessed; and the crime
Was doubly wrapped in mys'try for a time.
And zephyrs chant a dirge so soft and low
In mem'ry of the happy long ago,
When Evalena ran with nimble feet,
To chase the bees among the clover sweet.

EVALENA

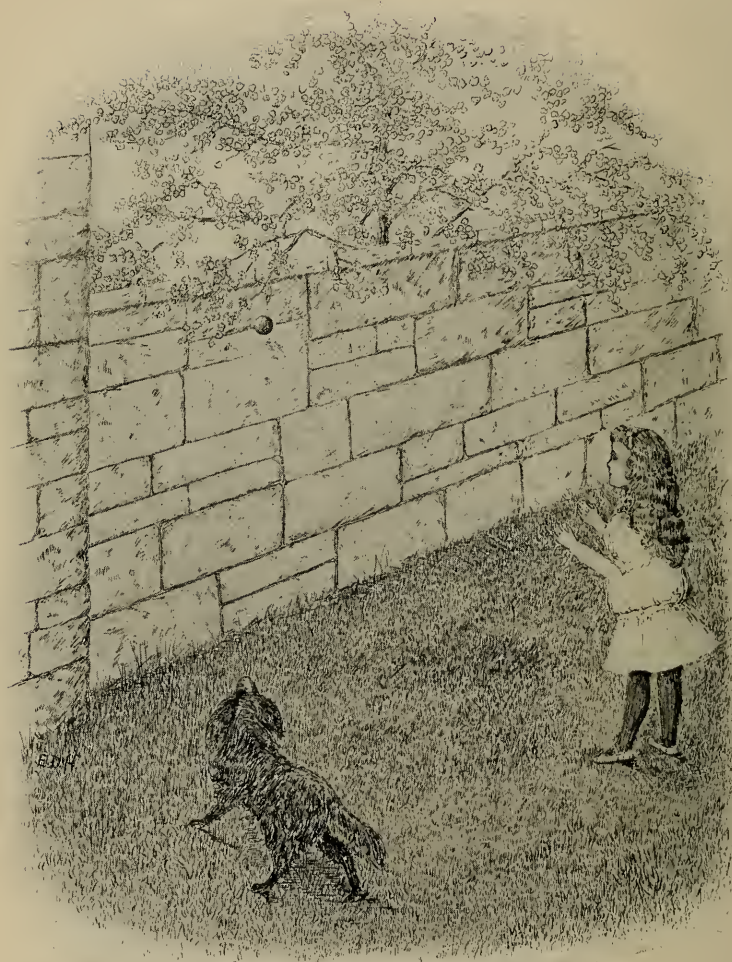


"STEPPING WITH AGILE FOOT FROM STONE TO STONE."

EVALENA

O happy, happy time! when all she knew,
Or dreamed, or hoped, or loved, was good and true;
Nor ventured far beyond the old stone wall,
Which oft rebounded back her hoop and ball.

One eve Sir Randall came upon the lawn,
As was his wont in happy days ago,
To join his little child in race and game;
And Lady Ethel through the arbor came,
And laughed until the tears ran down her cheek
To see her dear ones play at hide and seek.
At length, when quite fatigued, the little maid
Ran where her mother sat, and gently laid
Her head upon her breast and stroked her hair;
And floated off to happy dreamland there.
And Papa Randall on the grass lay down,
And said "I envy no man in the town.
My wife, if I should lose this fine estate,
Be left to poverty or *any* fate,
With you and Evalena, and God's grace,
I'd boldly look the whole world in the face;
I'd struggle on so manfully and true,
So holy is my love for her and you".
And Lady Ethel clasped his hand and smiled;
And happy tears fell on the sleeping child.
The great red sun, just sliding down the West,
Seemed half inclined to quit his flight and rest,
But moving onward, seemed to say "Good Night;
I'll come again and view the pretty sight."
But when the sun again rode in the sky
And peered among the shrubs with searching eye,
The tell-tale crape waved out upon the breeze;
And zephyrs breathed a dirge among the trees.
And through the open door the King of Day
Heard cries of anguish—heard the servants say



"THE OLD STONE WALL WHICH OFT REBOUNDED BACK HER HOOP
AND BALL."

E V A L E N A

“My God! my lady,—lifeless on her bed!
‘A quick and painless death’, the doctor said.”
“But, Phyllis, quick! what did the doctor say?”
“To quiet Master, send the child away.”
“To quiet Master, help us God, I pray.
He is not sane; but raves since break of day.
There up and down the arbor path he walks
With folded arms. So soft and low he talks.
Then speeds his steps and raves with gestures wild.
Go, John, to him, and I will keep the child.”
And falling on her knees, the faithful nurse
Crosses herself and calls on God to *curse*
The soul of Phyllis if she ever dare
To faithless be, or ever cease to care
For Evalena with a mother’s love.

The weary days have plodded on apace,
As plods the pointers on the dial’s face;
And over field and hill-side autumn leaves
Fall thickly where the lately gathered sheaves
Stood rich and full. And now the brooklet sings
A doleful roundelay; the grape-vine swings
Its withered tendrils in the autumn breeze;
And squirrels chatter gayly in the trees.
The calm of nature settles over all;
A radiant, rare, rich, hazy, golden Fall.
And Evalena, full of youthful hope,
Returns again to hoop and skipping rope.
And Phyllis, mindful of each childish call,
Is sister, nurse, friend, father, mother, all.
The calm of nature ends the storm of death.
And as Sir Randall raved with every breath,
A sudden change came like the silent sea;
So calm, in fact, ’twas pitiful to see.
The parent, who so fondly pledged his love



"WHERE OLD GRAY STONES PILED HIGH AMONG THE CLAY."

E V A L E N A

Through any fate which Fortune chose to weave,
Sat down with folded hands and drooping head,
Content the livelong day to mope and grieve.
And years went by, but still no note of time
Came to that aching heart with merry chime;
But listless as a breathless summer day,
Saw not his little Eva at her play.
The youthful heart can break and heal anew;
And as the little Eva taller grew,
A stately presence seemed her fallen lot;
And yet her presence Randall heeded not.
And has he quite forgot the little maid,
Who on that last, last night so sweetly lay
Upon her mother's breast in childish dream?
O God of Pity! are things as they seem?

"They come not single spies", but trouble sore
Unto the burdened heart come by the score.
The bees hum in the clover blossoms sweet,
The squirrels chatter in their gay retreat,
The brooklet, dancing gayly, speeds away;
But Evalena heeds them not to-day.
For down the wooded path, close to the brook,
A funeral train moves slowly to a nook
Where old gray stones, piled high among the clay,
Had served the purpose of a vault one day.
And when the grave is filled by friendly hands,
And in the throng the gray haired Bishop stands,
And while Affliction kneels with heart-ache sore,
He sprinkles all with holy water o'er.
For Phyllis said, one day in solemn mood,
When in their rambles, passing through the wood,
They stopped to rest within the old stone vault,
Which stood condemned, and long had been at fault,
Unused perhaps for fifty years or more,

EVALENA

And there sat down within the open door,
"This holy place—it does my poor soul good,
To sit within this sacred, holy wood,
Within this vault where many mourners knelt
And told to God the crushing grief they felt.
And, Evalena, darling, mark this spot;
Remember! when the world shall know me not.
When I have journeyed to my final day,
Here mingle deep my ashes with this clay."

The day is done; the cheerless eve
Is followed by the dreary night;
And o'er my soul the shadows weave
No ray of joy or spark of light.
My harp moans sadly in the breeze,
The village bell tolls mournfully,
All other sounds, save such as these,
The night has shut away from me.
The weary longings of my soul,
Have of myself become a part;
And like the bells at evening toll
A requiem from out my heart.

What caused this Paul Revere of olden fame
(This Paul Revere of daring, but the name
Is not Revere), who up the gully dashed;
And through the underbrush his charger crashed,
And flashed his rifle in the sunlight glare,
And followed up the trail of hounds and hare,
To check his foaming steed with sudden jerk,
As though a flying arrow or a dirk
Had pierced his heart?
Could it have been a melancholy song,
Sung lingeringly the sadness to prolong?
Or was it trembling lips of rosy red,

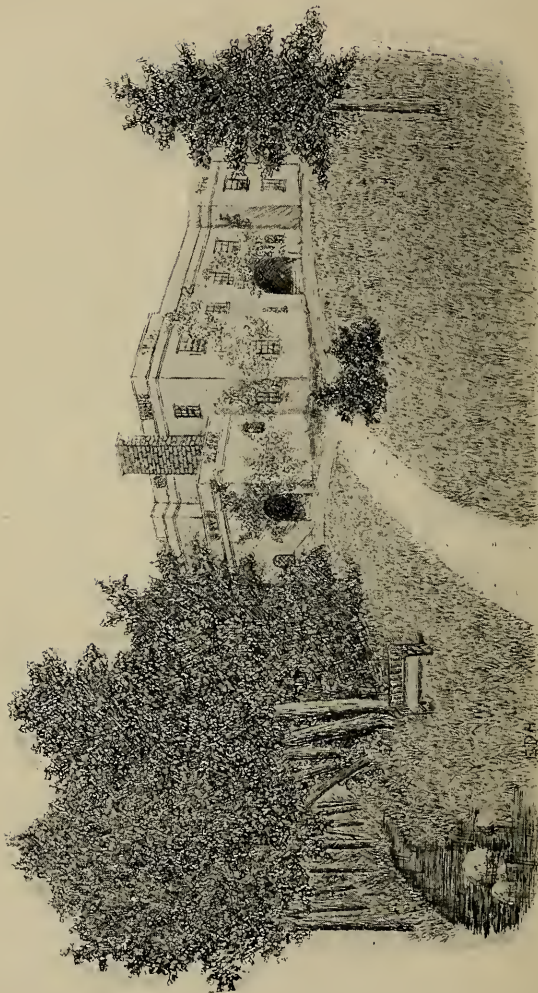
EVALENA

Belonging to a well poised, stately head,
And matchless shoulders and a taper hand,
Which swept the strings with swiftness and command?

Well, Evalena's quick ear caught the sound—
The steed's impatient stamping on the ground—
And springing to her feet, with heart elate,
Paused not until she reached the garden gate.
And Royal Hatfield stood, with thoughtful mien,
Trying the while to think where he had seen,
That face before. Those eyes as dark as night,
Illumined with a sudden changing light,
Were not unknown. Those taper hands—and then,
Like some forgotten dream recalled again,
Came sudden knowledge. “Ah!” he cried, “I know,
It must be half a dozen years ago,
When giving chase, we crossed this very wood.
I found my charger's courage wasn't good,
I hunted up the Hall at Randall's place,
And waited while the party finished chase.
And such a host! and such a little girl!
What was her name?—it wasn't Grace—or Pearl;
No—Evalena! Now I quite recall
The little maiden's lovely eyes, and all.
I'll call at Randall's ere the set of sun,
And tell him what a wretched thing I've done;
Apologize for tresspass on his ground.
Good speed, my charger, for I hear no sound
Of bark or neigh.” And onward with a dash,
He follows up the trail with spur and lash.

A visit from young Royal at the Hall
Is welcomed by the surly host and all.
Such winning ways and such a graceful mien,
Young Evalena ne'er before had seen.

EVALENA



"THE HALL, THE LAWN, THE BROOK WITH FLASH AND WHIRL."

EVALENA

And when he said "There surely has a change
Come o'er your father, for he seems so strange;
He is not like The Master of this Hall."
In confidence and trust she told him all.
She spoke to him about her mother's death;
And said her father's change came in that hour.
But said "I'll love him till my latest breath;
And shield his life, if God but gives me power."
And then burst forth the quick tears of relief;
And Evalena's slight form shook with grief.
The man, unmanned, spoke tender words of cheer,
Which to a breaking heart were kind and dear.
And when a half a dozen visits more
Were paid the Hall, young Evalena wore
With modest pride, a diamond-studded band,
And in return had pledged her heart and hand.

Where love is master, death can not dethrone
The longing of the soul to meet its own.
And many years were spent with but one thought;
One view and but one purpose Randall sought—
To follow after her whose feet had trod
The mystic road which leads to Nature's God.
But when one crossed his path, so young and fair,
With soulful eyes, and sunlight in the hair,
And ringing laugh, and step majestic, light,
Like her, long vanished from his mortal sight,
Dead memories, reviving, o'er him crept;
And in his bitterness Sir Randall wept.
A wild, mad longing to possess her hand,
Was from a longing to a purpose fanned.
And swift and eager as the tempest's sigh,
Pursued his phantom as in days gone by.
And Agnes Ritchie, with her girlish face,
And sunny hair and sweet and winning grace,

Without a thought or wish to play a part,
 Became the idol of his childish heart.
 Was not the old estate the dearest place,
 Of all estates upon the whole world's face?
 The Hall, the lawn, the brook with flash and whirl,
 Did fascinate and lure the dreamy girl;
 And in ecstatic bliss beneath the veil
 Of old point lace and orange blossoms frail,
 Repeated in the fullness of her heart,
 To "Honor, love, obey, 'till death shall part."

Folly and Envy share alike the pain
 Conceived within a rash and jealous brain.
 Long ere a twelve-month passes o'er the head
 Of her who kneels beside the bridal bed
 In fervent prayer to God to lead aright
 Her foolish heart,—unspotted in His sight,
 A hatred almost *fierce*, burns at the heart
 Of Evalena—piercing like a dart;
 For has she not in all these hollow years,
 With aching heart locked up the unshed tears?
 In sweet and sacred pity for her sire,
 Crushed out her every cherished, fond desire?
 Repulsed by silence from her father's knee,
 Oft to her lonely chamber did she flee,
 And on her snowy couch, with blinding grief,
 Found startling dreams a hideous relief.
 And now to daily look upon a face,
 Of wondrous beauty,—e'en without a trace
 Of care or sorrow, and to hear the song
 Of joy and happiness the whole day long,—
 A song of joy sung to her heart's quick gasp,
 Is like a jarring discord in its rasp.
 To see, to hear, to witness e'en as much
 As, white hands clasp the hand she dare not touch.

E V A L E N A

'Tis autumn; and the grand old wood resounds
With bugle, neighing steed, and baying hounds.
And happiness, with all controlling power,
Holds Evalena captive; for the hour
Of Royal's coming home is now at hand.
Returning from a distant foreign land.
And for the once the dark-eyed girl forgets
The jealous hate and all of life's small frets,
And putting things to rights with busy hands,
Confides to Agnes all her secret plans.
But Agnes listens with a whiter face
Than 'is her wont. But with her own good grace,
Congratulates the happy hearted girl,
Who, all unheeding in excitement's whirl,
Notes not the change.
But brave, sweet Agnes, with her honest heart,
Reveals a little—keeping back a part;
And says in meekness, watching Eva's face,
"I've met young Hatfield at Sir Raleigh's place".
A flush of pride lights up the young girl's cheek;
"If you have met, his praise I need not speak".
But none the less recounts his praises o'er,—
An object fit for women to adore.
Then nervously upsets a costly vase,
And turning, meets her lover face to face.
A little cry of joy—a sudden start—
A look of mute surprise on Royal's part—
A clasp of lovers' hands—a lover's kiss—
Some praise of Evalena, not amiss—
A little scream from Agnes' pallid lips,
As Royal stooped to kiss her finger tips.
Then turning to the vase, with much ado,
With some pretense to mend it, she withdrew.
A look of some confusion and surprise,
For one brief moment shone in Eva's eyes;



"THEN NERVOUSLY UPSETS A COSTLY VASE."

"Why should *not* Royal kiss her pretty hand;
 Was he deserving of a reprimand?
 Was she not Lady Agnes of the Hall?
 Should he not show some courtesy to all?"
 An interview on themes of foreign note,
 And wondrous tales of beauteous lands remote,
 His "lovely trip", his pleasant voyage home,
 (To mention nothing of his stay in Rome),
 With many other topics of import,
 To which young Eva eagerly paid court.
 So time moved on so quickly in his flight,
 And day by day brought beauteous visions bright,
 Of a green vale through which the river's foam
 Leaps over rocks beneath a cottage home
 High nestled in the clover-blossom bank;
 And down the winding path the angler's plank,
 Hung in with many a rude and rustic twist,
 Where ruddy lanterns light the midnight mist.—
 A cottage home with many gabled roofs,
 And down the deep ravine the flying hoofs,
 Of Arab horses, swift and quick of ear,
 Of gentle blood—fleet steed without a peer.—
 A vision bright of future days serene,
 When Evalena reigns a magic queen
 'Neath gabled roof; and shineth from afar
 Her love-lit vision like a brilliant star.

The hunting season with its merry noise
 Brings joyous sport to old folks, girls and boys.
 How gallantly the horseman mounts his steed
 Which champs the bits, impatient to be freed.
 A group of hounds lie listless, half asleep,
 But at the signal word, in concert leap;—
 Dash headlong on, through many a tangled brake,
 While laugh and shout the woodland echoes wake.



"HUNG IN WITH MANY A RUDE AND RUSTIC TWIST."

EVALENA

'Twas at the closing of a brilliant week
Of rivalry in beauty and in speed,
Among the dashing grooms of whom I speak,
That Royal gained a vict'ry for his steed.
Brave Fleetfoot! with your white arched neck;
How Evalena's fingers strove to deck
Your bridle, and the girth and stirrups too;
Then waved her handkerchief and cried "Adieu",
As quickly past the other chargers flew
Your nimble feet,
Now eagerly she waits for thy return;—
Walks down the path, that she may sooner learn
Of thy success;—or,—can it be defeat?
But hark! a voice her own name does repeat.
Breathless, she hears her father's Agnes say,
"Does Evalena know the role you play?
Royal, I thought to never see you more;
Now this one thing I beg of you—implore;
Make known the facts to Eva; It is best.
Tell of your past engagement, and the rest;—
How oft we quarreled, and with great disdain
At length we parted, ne'er to meet again.
In future, when we meet beneath yon roof,
That you are welcome quite, I shall give proof.
Tomorrow you are going far away;
In your last interview with Eva, say
What I have told you."
And with a solemn promise to obey,
He touched his hat, and quickly rode away.
Ah, Fleetfoot! if your tongue a language knew,
What dreadful things that language could undo;
For O! not *all* did Evalena hear,
As with a beating heart she crouched in fear,
Behind a giant Oak which stood near by.
Unconsciously she uttered one faint cry;

E V A L E N A

Then dropped in silence, like a wounded bird;
The passing horseman stopped, for he had heard;—
Leaped to the ground, and begged an interview;
Entreated her to stay and hear him through;
Vowed constancy until his dying day;
And said "Sweetheart, you know the role I play".
The look of hatred in her pallid face,
Revealed the one weak trait of her proud race;
And like a meteor in its sudden flight,
She sped away, without the kind "Good Night",
And whispered vows, and clasp of hands so dear,—
Sped onward with a dread suspicious fear.
Humiliated by her unjust scorn,
The man deferred a meeting 'till the morn;
And confident the morrow would restore
Her faith in him, to pledge her heart once more,
He turned about and sought the town near by,
Scarce knowing where he went, or how, or why.

The early dawn saw Hatfield mount his steed,
And passing over Randall's woodland mead,
Saluted John, Sir Randall's body-guard,
To whom he gave a pretty note and card,
To be delivered unto Eva's maid.
Then waited, while the answer was delayed.
Excuses came, disheartening but polite;—
"A nervous headache and a sleepless night;
Perhaps at evening she could talk with him;
And would he e'er forgive her recent whim?"
To hasten time or change the tardy hour
Of meeting her, was quite beyond his power;
And walking through the wood, disconsolate,
He mused a while beside the wicket gate;
Then joined his hostess in her morning walk,
With whom he had a confidential talk,

EVALENA

Concerning Evalena's escapade;
And told her of the note from Eva's maid;
Related all the details of the case.
Then in his hands he bowed his troubl'd face.
Then Agnes called attention to the tread
Of footsteps, where the autumn leaves lay dead;
And in a moment, passing with a stare,
The stable boy just paused to greet the pair;
Then hurried onward, happy for the chance
To tell the morning news, with meaning glance,
Among the servants: first to one, then all.
'Twas whispered later in the servants' hall.
Ere "ev'ning", whispering tongues had done their
work,—
A duty whispering tongues ne'er wish to shirk.

The early sunset tints the village spires;
And from the chapel windows, ruddy fires
Reflect a thousand glints of light and glow,
Upon the dancing brook that lies below.
The evening air bespeaks a coming frost;
The great round sun behind the hill is lost;
The raven's croak sounds from a lonely glade;
The glorious autumn day begins to fade.
Before the blazing hearth Sir Randall sits
And views the red-tongued demon as it flits
From log to log, and with increasing roar
Casts dark, fantastic shadows on the floor.
With stately step old John brings in the tea;
But with a gesture Randall makes the plea
Of nervousness; and speaks in accents wild
Of evil omens,—like a frightened child.
"And heard you not the raven's croak, my man?
And just this eve our good old Doctor Sann
Remarked to me, my Eva's mind runs wild

EVALENA



"HAD POOR SIR RANDALL NAPPING IN HIS CHAIR."

E V A L E N A

From some great nervous shock—my poor dear
child;

And young Sir Royal wished to speak with her;
But Doctor Sann could not let that occur.

He said 'No matter now if friend or foe
Stand in her presence, she would never know;

A raging fever dulls her brain and sight'.

And so he kindly said to him 'Good Night'."

And John, the faithful, putting down the tray,
Related all the glad news of the day.

He spoke with pride about his country's fleet
Off England's coast, and all equipped to meet

His country's foe.

Told many little things, of this and that,

And his vagaries soothed with pleasant chat.

And John, wise John, before he was aware,

Had poor Sir Randall napping in his chair.

Dark days, sad eventides, and dreary morns;

No bloom of roses,—naught but leaves and thorns;

Hushed voices; footsteps in their muffled tread

Move silently about the dear one's bed.

Two moons had come and gone; yet at the Hall

Young Royal waited for his sweetheart's call.

Each morn he met the messenger with dread;

Each noon and evening disappointment read

Upon the countenance of Doctor Sann;

'Till one glad morn he heard the Doctor say.

"Hope, long deferred, swells in our hearts today.

The fever is a dread thing of the past.—

The crisis reached, the danger o'er at last.

In wonderment the dark eyes opened wide.

O pitying Saints! 'twere better had she died;

For when fond words were spoken o'er and o'er

By each kind friend whom she had known before,

E V A L E N A

She knew them not.
Bowed down with sorrow, Hatfield went his way;
Nor heard they more of him for many a day.
But when the snows from off the heath had gone,
And violets with beauty decked the lawn,
A letter came to Agnes from afar,—
Scrawled at the close, the single letter “R”;
The writer wished to hear from home once more;
And many lines of self reproach it bore,—
Inquired eagerly about the state
Of Evalena’s intellect of late.
And with an old time flourish, wrote “Good Bye”,
And in a Post Script urged a quick reply.
A steamer, sailing out of port next day,
The precious answer bore, without delay.
Intent on what the letter would reveal,
With nervous fingers Royal broke the seal;—
Read hurriedly at first, and then re-read.
And this is part of what the letter said:
“I can but think that truth will yet prevail;
And all malicious thought and effort fail.
I realize ’tis asking much of you,
And you must be the judge of what you do;
But, will you come?
At midnight twice I heard her speak your name.
Her dark eyes’ brilliant luster is the same
As in the happy past, ere you and I
A great grief knew.”
With all the past in memory again,
With great emotion Royal took his pen;
But sat in reverie the half night through,
Reflecting o’er and o’er if false or true
That dead, dark past.
Then, as the old clock chimed within the tower,
A saddened man walked out at midnight’s hour.

E V A L E N A

He crossed the common; on his errand bent,
Walked to the station and this message sent.
“Much pressing business causes some delay.
Leave Castlebar for home one week this day.”

A springtime morning,—bright the purple hue
Of violets; and bright the pearly dew.
“The violets! ah, Phyllis loved them well.
Come, Agnes, let us bring them from the dell
And wreath them all about her sepulcher;
And ferns;—yes, let us take the ferns to her.
And hasten, Agnes, for I fear a storm;
The atmosphere is heavy and so warm”.
So spake the daughter of Sir Randall’s house.
And full of buoyance, with life renewed,
She seemed not o’er her fancied grief to brood;
And Agnes stood entranced, and rendered dumb,
So glad the opportunity had come
To gain her confidence.
Then with a kiss upon the daughter’s brow,
Said “Yes, dear, I will come, I’m coming now;
But do not walk so fast;—your strength will fail;
Remember, Evalena, you are frail”.
And with bright talk on topics of delight,
They plucked the violets to left and right;
And cut and tied the ferns in garlands long;
And from the young girl’s lips there came a song
Of gushing purity, of springtime joy.
And while they wandered thus, the morning passed;
And when with hands and baskets full at last,
They reached the temple of the honored dead,
The poor. Frail Evalena knelt and said,
“O, Phyllis, Phyllis! thou who loved me well,
Wake from your long, long sleep, and break the
spell

E V A L E N A

That haunts me ever like my own death knell.
O, Phyllis! thou ne'er knew that bold, bad man,
So like a girlish coquette, with her fan,
Who smiles above the circle with love's eyes,
While scornful, curling lip the look belies."
And as they spread the leaves and blossoms bright,
The Lady Agnes said, "Dear, is it right
That you should judge poor Royal so untrue?
Sir Hatfield is a loyal friend to you.
I have a bit of news for you, my dear,
Ere many days Sir Hatfield will be here.
He longs to see you now again, he wrote."
Surprised, the young girl said, "You had a note?
Oh! now I *know* Sir Hatfield is untrue.
Oh! why did Royal write the note to *you*?
Can I forgive him? No, I never can.
Oh! may I never look upon the man".
Then with a loud and maniacal cry,
Poured fourth entreaties wild with sob and sigh.
Begged Agnes, "In the name of all that's true",
To give her back the love that once she knew.
Then tactfully did Agnes strive (in vain),
To calm the stricken mind and soothe her pain;
But now her agitation knows no bounds;
And through the vault her frenzied cry resounds;
And all ere Lady Agnes is aware,
Bounds through the door, with ravings of despair;
And like a flash, with double strength possessed,
She swings the door. The iron bolt is pressed
Firm in the old stone masonry.

A bolt of lightning from the darkened sky;—
Excited voices, as the storm sweeps by;
A consultation in Sir Randall's Hall,
Between the master and his servants all.

E V A L E N A

The Lady Randall from her home is gone.
They last had seen her walking on the lawn
With Evalena, many hours ago.
“But surely Evalena can not know;
She clings to Mary Ellen with such fear,
And cries aloud when any one is near”.
“Leave her to Mary Ellen” Randall said,
“From infancy a storm has been her dread.
Methinks her maid can manage her the best,
And doubtless soon will quiet her to rest.”
Then, with an ashen hue upon his face,
Entreated all his men to search the place.
But Michael stood apart from all the rest,
And said, “My master, put not to the test
The bravery of men in such a storm.
Impossible such duty to perform.
Such lightning-play old England ne’er has seen
On rocks and gully and the wood between.
I doubt not that my Lady found retreat
In Hiram’s Lodge; and when again we meet,
Will laugh at all our groundless fears.
Old Hiram’s wife will make a pleasant stay
Beneath her roof, in her old-fashioned way.
Great stories she can tell of times gone by.
My Lady can’t be lonely should she try.”
But evening came, and after it the night:
The lightning’s flash on flash still dazed the sight.
The storm grew wild and furious and loud:
The old oak trees beneath its fury bowed.
When Randall gave to all his last precept,
The conference had closed; the household slept.

A long loud wail of horror and despair,
Rings out in terror on the midnight air.
A wail of anguish like a spirit’s cry



"A HOPELESS MANIAC WALKS TO AND FRO."

E V A L E N A

That floats upon the storm while passing by.
A rush of footsteps in the servant's hall;
And superstitious dread possesses all.
Each looks to each until the night is fled;
Nor seeks again the lone, deserted bed.
Did Evalena hear that cry of fear,
From out the darkened vault, when death drew
near?

Did visions of a low grave wreathed with flowers
Change the long, black night into happy hours?
Or did she sleep, and sleeping dream of youth,
Of early childhood, ere she felt the tooth
Of jealousy and hate and bitter scorn?
Ah, who can tell! for ere the rosy morn
Dame reason fled;—left equal wrong and right,
And curtained out the vision of the night.
And when the day has kissed the mountain tips,
And in the brook the swallow skims and dips,
Within the wooded path, with eyes aglow,
A hopeless maniac walks to and fro.

A messenger from Hiram's, at the dawn,
Brought not a clue with which to work upon.
And once again, as in the long ago,
Sir Randall walks the arbor to and fro.
And in his anguish wrings his hands and groans;
And begs his servants all, in piteous tones,
To find his darling.

"And he who finds shall make his own demand—
My whole estate, my house, my lawn, my land."
Then rose a murmur from the servants all;
And spake their minds in most indignant drawl.
"And will he do it?" "O, the shame, the shame,
To leave the only child who bears his name,
Without a dower". "He who seeks may find

That which would shatter poor Sir Randall's
mind."

" 'Tis my opinion, candidly expressed,
The least we say about it is the best".

And so they parted company again.

Some sought the gulch, while others crossed the
fen;

But Michael noted now a fallen tree

Across the old stone vault—a sight to see.

Its massive trunk lay buried in the clay,

In falling, it had pushed the stones away;

And underneath the tattered ivy fringe,

The oaken door lay twisted from its hinge;

And just beyond,—O Heaven, shield the sight!

Poor Michael stands amazed and stiff from fright.

Among the ferns, all in a little heap,

The Lady Randall lies like one asleep.

One arm flung out across her tufted bed;

The other bent beneath her pretty head.

Two doctors bend above the prostrate form

To ascertain if yet the flesh is warm.

"The pose suggests a suicide". said one,

"That theory", the other said. "is done.

They tell me that she sought a refuge here,

I say her death was caused by sudden fear.

The great tree, falling on the outside wall,

Produced heart failure and a sudden fall,

Look for yourself,—you'll find her all unscathed".

Three days have passed. O ne'er may time again

Bring agony so deep to hearts of men.

A cloud of sorrow, hanging like a pall,

Has cast a shadow over Randall's Hall.

Earth seems a dreary place to every one,

From morning's dewy dawn 'til set of sun.

E V A L E N A

To them the gold-finch on the garden wall
Has changed its sweetest tones to drops of gall.
A manly form walks leisurely along,
And listens to the sweet and gushing song.
To him the world holds nothing to annoy,
The sunshine all a glory, life a joy.
Approach, O happy man, thy journey done,
To where an old man totters in the sun
And points a palsied finger to the path,
Where lately sped the tempest in its wrath.
But stay not, for he knoweth not the truth;
And still relates a tale in words uncouth.
But find the young girl's *maid*, and *she* will say
What all occurred on that eventful day.
Then, go thy way. For thee, life's revel o'er,
The happy, joyous day will break no more.
Time passes on, regardless of the fate
Of her, who did such tragedy create.
A *stranger* seeing her is wont to say,
"A soulless being, living out her day."
And so it seems. The soul once tempest-tossed,
Seems to have vanished;—like a spirit lost.
And guileless as an infant in its play,
She wanders where the flagstones bridge the way.
The spring birds sing a joyous song to her;
But to her mind a song does not occur.
For her, love's chapter closes; and we say,
"A *soulless* being, living out her day."

The End.

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